

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A rare-earth oxide thermal spray coated article comprising:

a substrate and

a coating layer formed by thermally spraying a rare-earth oxide thermal spraying powder onto a surface of the substrate,

said coating layer being of a gray or black color having, in the L*a*b* color space, an L* value of up to 50, an a* value of -3.0 to +3.0, and a b* value of -3.0 to +3.0 and containing carbon or molybdenum.

2. (canceled)

3. (previously presented) A rare-earth oxide thermal spray coated article comprising:

a substrate and

a coating layer formed by thermally spraying a rare-earth oxide thermal spraying powder onto a surface of the substrate,

said coating layer being of a gray or black color having, in the L*a*b* color space, an L* value of up to 50, an a* value of -3.0 to +3.0, and a b* value of -3.0 to +3.0

wherein the coating layer has a carbon content of 0.1 to 2% by weight or a titanium or molybdenum content of 1 to 1000 ppm.

4. (currently amended) A rare-earth oxide powder for thermal spraying, which powder is of a gray or black color having, in the $L^*a^*b^*$ color space, an L^* value of up to 50, an a^* value of -3.0 to +3.0 and a b^* value of -3.0 to +3.0 and containing carbon or molybdenum.

5. (canceled)

6. (currently amended) A The rare-earth oxide powder for thermal spraying, of claim 4, which powder is of a gray or black color having, in the $L^*a^*b^*$ color space, an L^* value of up to 50, an a^* value of -3.0 to +3.0 and a b^* value of -3.0 to +3.0,

wherein the powder has a carbon content of 0.1 to 2% by weight or a titanium or molybdenum content of 1 to 1000 ppm.

7. (new) A rare-earth oxide powder for thermal spraying, which powder is of a gray or black color having, in the $L^*a^*b^*$ color space, an L^* value of up to 50, an a^* value of -3.0 to +3.0 and a b^* value of -3.0 to +3.0,

wherein the powder has a carbon content of 0.1 to 2% by weight.

8. (new) A rare-earth oxide powder for thermal spraying, which powder is of a gray or black color having, in the $L^*a^*b^*$ color space, an L^* value of up to 50, an a^* value of -3.0 to +3.0 and a b^* value of -3.0 to +3.0,

wherein the powder has a titanium content of 1 to 1000 ppm.

9. (new) A rare-earth oxide powder for thermal spraying, which powder is of a gray or black color having, in the $L^*a^*b^*$ color space, an L^* value of up to 50, an a^* value of -3.0 to +3.0 and a b^* value of -3.0 to +3.0,

wherein the powder has a molybdenum content of 1 to 1000 ppm.